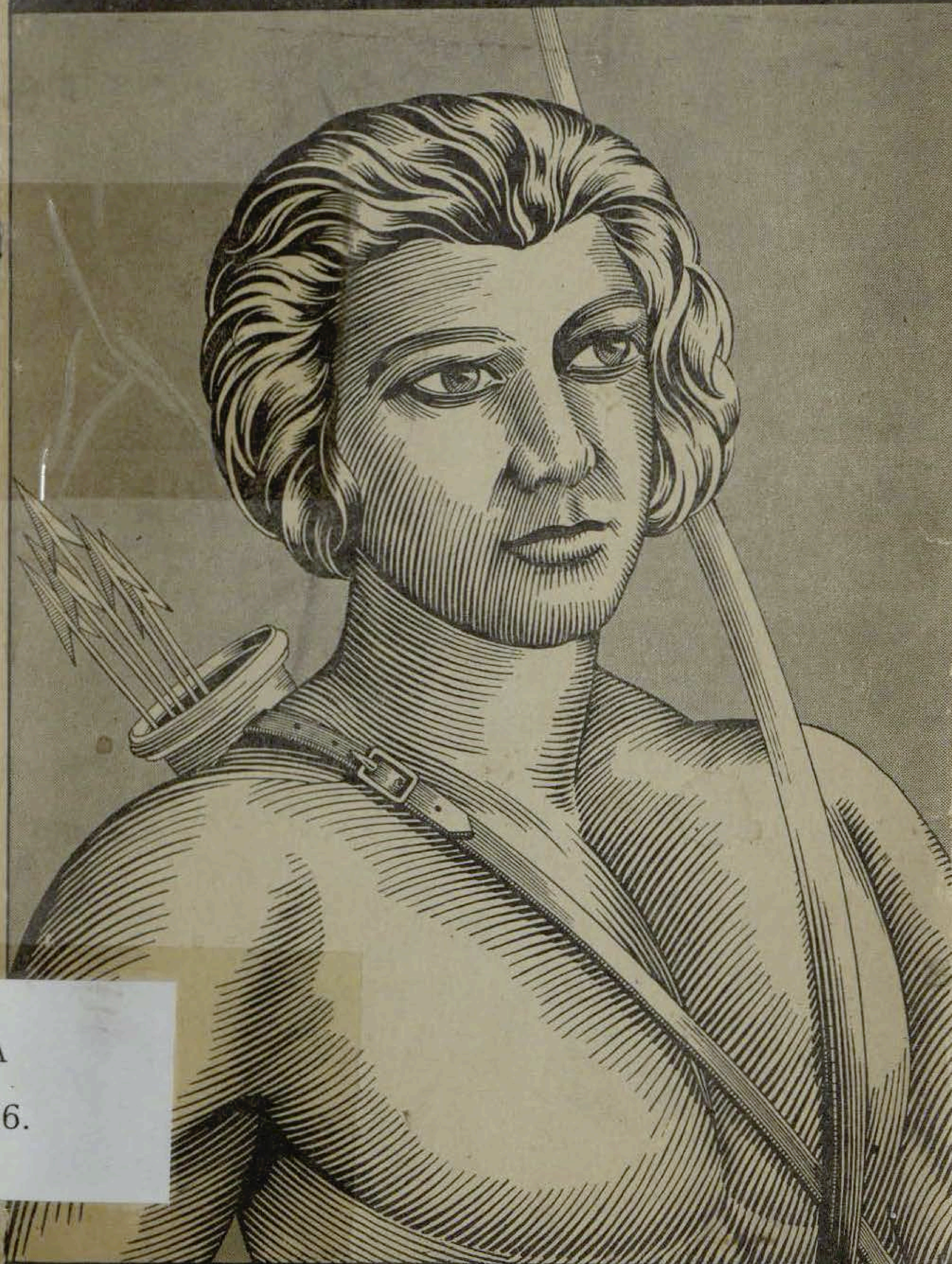
THE ADVENTURES OF THE BLACK MAN IN HIS SEARCH FOR GOD



H. M. SINGH

The "Adventures of the Black Man in His Search for God"

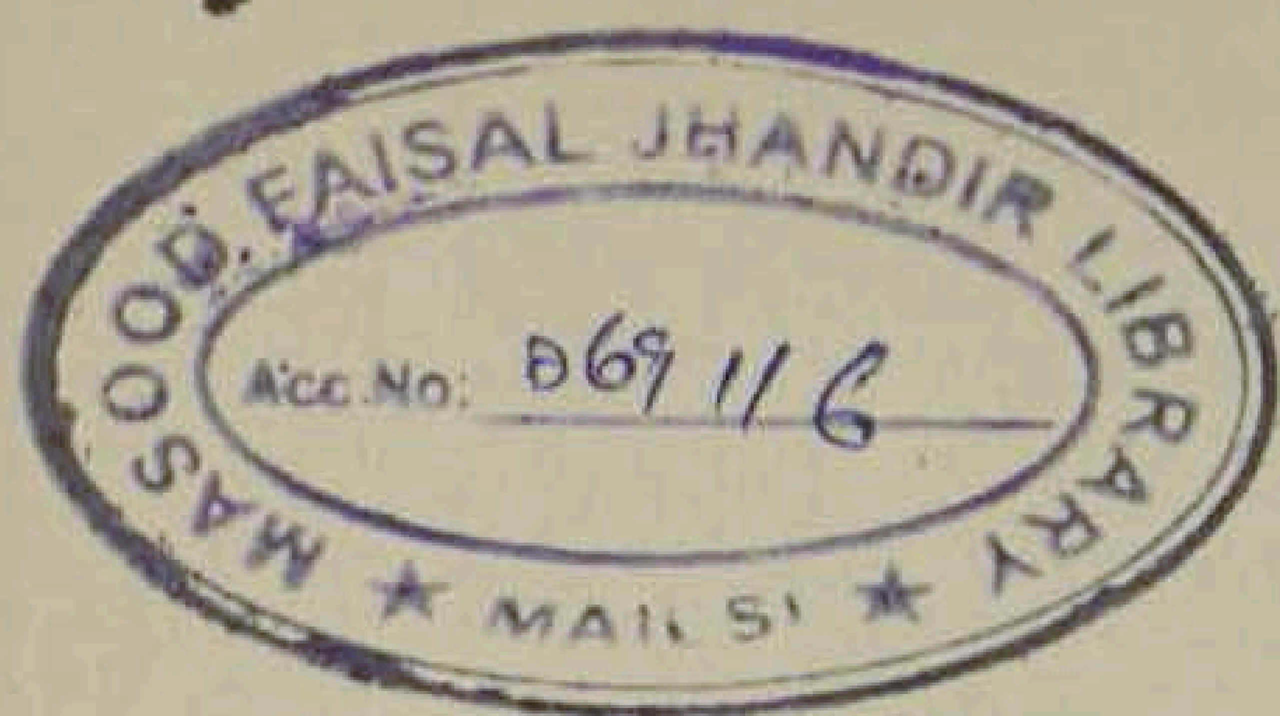
BY

H. M. Singh



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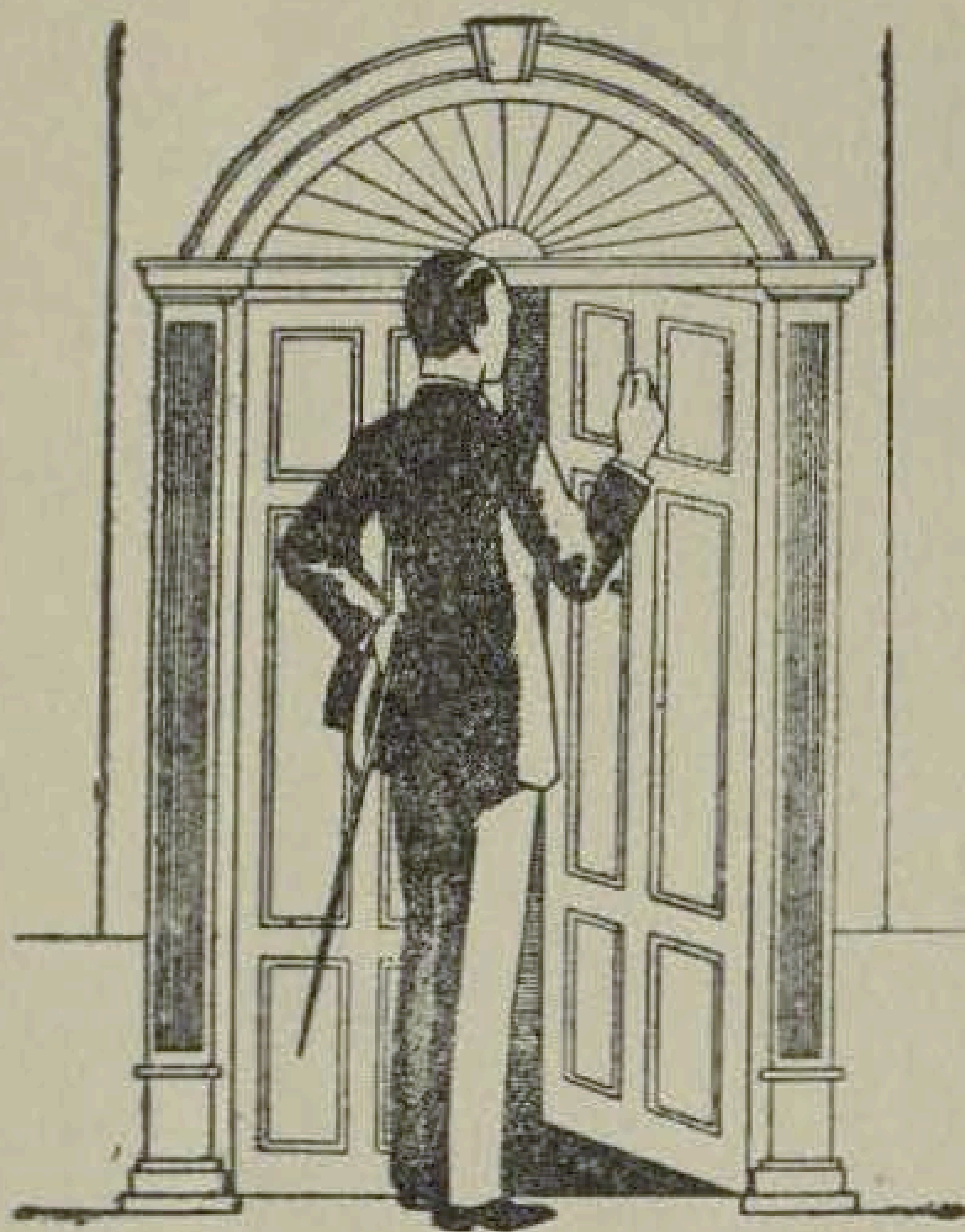
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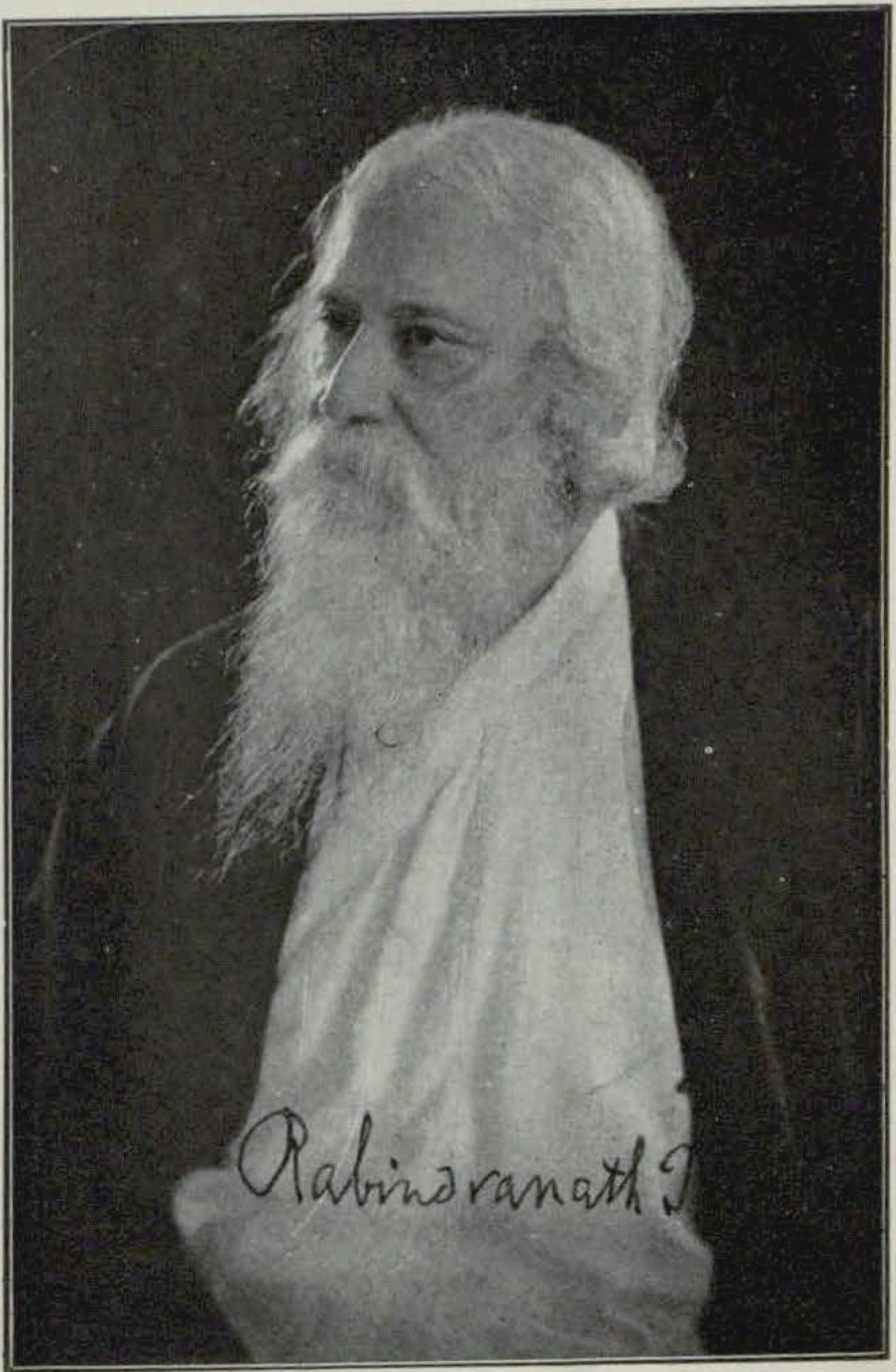
To

THE 'BANTU GIRL'

who first started on her adventures in search for God, this edition is dedicated.



"KNOCK AND IT SHALL BE OPENED"



THE "IDEAL OF THE EAST"

Poet Rabindra Nath Tagore, the Sage of Santiniketan, who represented the Orient in his own personality, and possessed all the virtues that the East has to offer to the entire world.

"ONLY WHEN THE WEST COMES TO HIM WILL THERE BE PEACE!

"AND I WHO BELONG TO AN UNRECOGNIZED CORNER OF THE WORLD HAVE BEEN CHERISHING THE HOPE THAT VISVA-BHARATI WILL FIND VOICE TO PROCLAIM THAT PEACE IS NOT WAITING TO BE CONCOCTED OUT OF THEIR CLEVERNESS BY MEN WHO DO NOT BELIEVE IN IT ....

BUT PEACE CAN ONLY COME IN THE SPIRITUAL REVELATION OF MAN WHOSE INEXHAUSTIBLE WEALTH IS IN HIS OWN FULFILMENT."

Rabindranath Tagore

PREFACE

Though the book speaks for itself, yet I have been asked by friends, whose advice I value, to add a preface to it. Well, here it is:

Let not the reader think it strange that the black man should carry a bow and arrow in his hands, and a quiver at his back. To anyone acquainted with things oriental, this is far less extraordinary than that a Bantu girl should carry a 'knobkerry' or a white girl a 'niblic', as happens in Mr. George Bernard Shaw's "The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God", and

in Mr. Charles Herbert Maxwell's "The Adventures of the White Girl in Her Search for God", respectively. Let it not also seem strange to the reader, fair or otherwise, that the black man here represented is so rude and frank, and devoid of those 'charm of manners' which the white folk consider it essential for a man, young or old. Nor should it be really a matter of surprise for the reader to discover that the black man is also unaware of that modern term: "Modern Gallantry", but . . . .

"Where ignorance is bliss,

'Tis folly to be wise."

The black man remains what he essentially is . . . . the symbol of Truth-

fulness, Simplicity, Humility and Service. He pooh-poohs the materialistic and Godless West and laughs a hearty laugh.

H. M. Singh

Lahore, India.

The Adventures of the Black Man in His Search for God

I

> " You are old, Father William, the young man said,
> And your hair has become very white,
> Yet you incessantly stand on your head,
> Do you think, at your age, it is right ? "

" Where is God ? " said a black man to an old 'paradoxical' Irishman who was talking tall and telling people something about God. The black man was one of the audience.

" Seek and ye shall find Him," he replied. He was telling rather boastfully that his red beard had turned to white in search of God, but his satisfaction was that he had at last found Him, and

had exhibited Him to the entire world. Now, however, he had taken upon himself, as a means of attraction, to stand on his head in public, and tell them something about God. When asked why he did this he would reply that this position was really correct, and that all other great men, and even ordinary men, were mistaken in the position they had adopted. He would also point out that many people were willing to pay money to come and see him stand on his head, who would not have done so if he had been content with his upright position. He was self-congratulatory enough to remark that in addition to his being paid sufficiently well, it had brought him to the light of day; and to become notorious was equally

good since he came to be known well by that method.

Later on, on being asked by the black young man, when again he was in his favourite position, why he had recourse to such a method, he went on to explain in the frankest way possible, that his real motive had been to arouse the Black Race of its 'hackneyed' conceptions of God, and give it an idea of what the Western goddesses, gods, and godlets were like . . . . (modern gallantry, eh!)

And, he went on to say, being still in his favourite position, that strangely enough his ideas had put the wind up, a 1933 Englishman, who had ventured to raise his voice against his (the old man's) notions about God.

As a matter of fact, though he had argued in a very clever manner, and said witty things about the people 'whom he wanted to put right', yet in the presentation of his own case he had made confusions worse confounded.

Now, the patient listener being found of amateur detection tried to probe deeper. He assured this idiosyncratic 'creature' that he was really in sympathy with his ideas and ideals and it would do him more good than harm, if he could think it judicious to confide in him.

"After all," he said, "the 1933 fellow whom you are alluding to has really slapped you in your face, and it would be wise on your part to let me be your sympathizer. Is it not really very

uncomfortable for you to remain in this awkward position?"

Finding himself utterly exposed and outwitted, he exclaimed in despair, "What am I to do, if I am not to starve? I am so popular when I do it and it provides an excellent means of livelihood. I stand on my head and am thus an object of wonder and admiration. But I don't accept peoples' coppers as a conjurer would. I pooh-pooh the idea, for, you know, after bearing such a hardship, how could I accept mere coppers and tickeys? My admirers equally realise the position I am in. And they fill my belly till it is full to overflowing."

"Or shall I say to over-blowing?" interrupted the impatient listener, "but

my Irish prodigy, could you let me have a peep into your fairyland, where, as you have told, there are beautiful gods and goddesses whom you have learnt to worship and adore, and who are also the gods and goddesses of the Western world."

The idea certainly flattered the bearded old man and he was prompt enough to reply: "Now, I want to extract a solemn promise from you, my man, that the adventure must be ours to see, and ours to know; and that you shall not play the changeling. I shall gladly show you my goddesses and gods, but give me your word, that what you listen to shall not be open to question . . . . . . And here we go ! ! ! "

II

And so they strode off to the forest side in their search for God. The black man was already equipped with a bow and arrow in his hands, and a quiver at his back. Being a black man, naturally, he was not afraid of anything. But only by way of precaution he kept with him his protective and destructive arms. The old man had changed his favourite position for the more common one. He was blithe in spirits . . . . happy as a lark.

The first thing they met was a mamba snake. On the sight of the snake, the black man straightened his

bow and arrow, and said to the mamba, "I wonder who made you and why he gave you the will to kill me and the venom to do it with."

The mamba being afraid of the colour and size of the black man beckoned him by a twist of its head to follow it, and led him to a pile of rocks on which sat an extraordinarily handsome and proportionately built white young man, his sharp-cut features being a mark of attraction. The look of his eyes was rather sleepy. The mamba disappeared into a hole, as soon as it had led the black young man and the grey old man to this smiling fellow.

"Who is he?" questioned the black man to his guide. The old man

had hitherto been quite silent, as by a freak of chance, he had happened to meet in this fellow some one who knew all his dirty tricks.

"He is the 'Prince Charming', the Lad Love." Hardly had he said so much, when they approached very near to the 'Smiling Prince'. The black man made a bow and smiled adoringly in return.

"I am seeking God," he said, "I am told you can direct me to where He can be found." The 'Prince Charming' cast a sly glance at the grey old man, and each understanding the other's thoughts, he replied, "Are you really very desirous of seeing God? Before I direct you to your way I must tell you I am God."

The black man opened his eyes pretty wide in surprise and ejaculated, "Are you God? Show Thyself unto me."

The 'Smiling Prince', so called for want of any other better name, who had concealed his bow and golden shafts somewhere beneath the rocks now showed himself in his proper form:

"I am Cupid. You see me? I am the God of Love. I am Love and as such I am God."

"H'm, so you are the blind fellow, who is always to be seen at balls, in theatres, picture-houses, Paris slums, Hyde Park, Piccadilly, and heaven only knows how many places elsewhere . . . . always out with your dirty game . . . . And say, what's Love?"

"I said God is Love, and Love gives and gives and goes on giving."

"No," said the grey old man who had hitherto been quite silent a listener, "Love takes and takes and goes on taking. When a woman loves a man she loves with the love of a lioness and eats him up and makes him a part of herself. From that time he has to think not of what pleases him, but of what pleases her. She stands between him and himself, between him and God. Love is a devouring thing. Can you imagine heaven with love in it?"

"In heaven there is nothing else," said the black man, "heaven is Love and Love is heaven. Love is not what you call love. I give my life for the service of other

human beings, because I wish that the broken fellowship between them and God may be restored. You do not love your fellow-men and so you do not love God. By love serve one another.

"You see it from the other end of the telescope in which human faces, of both sexes, appear quite beautiful only from a distance, and the more one gets in touch with them, the more abundantly clear their impurity becomes. Love in the West is simply lust, and as such, it is dust. He who indulges in such a lustful love plunges headlong into a dirty and filthy pool and finds no means of escape, and eventually gets lost. The 'staircase' wench, the 'London lass', or the 'Cafe-de-Paris' girl, each, is on an open exhibition to the world. It is its own

best commentary, and has shown itself in its entire nudity . . . . each nook and corner. And the less said about it the better.

" Love is a divine thing, more so, it is pure and crystal-clear ; you have never known it, and you never will know until you learn its rudiments from the Mighty East. You cannot deceive me even though you are a cunning and a fox-like 'God' . . . . Enough of your tomfoolery ! "

Soon enough, taking a handful of mud that he could find nearby on the sides of a patch of water, he hurled it with such a violent force that its truck the smiling Cupid with a thud right on his face besmearing his handsome features

altogether. The Cupid took to his heels.

"What sort of fellow you are," grumbled the grey old man, "you are a brute, you idle loon."

The black man calmed the old fellow with a "I am wae for it, my good man; now, come on . . . . there, there! that's like a good fellow."

And so they proceeded further in their search for God in the white man's fairyland.

III

They had not gone very far off when the black man disturbed a rattlesnake, who was gliding away when he said, " Well, Clicky-Clicky : you are not so ill-natured as the mamba. You give warning and go quietly about your business if we go quietly about ours. Your God must be nicer than the mamba's God."

On that, the rattlesnake came back and beckoned them to follow him which they did.

He led them to a waterfall where could be seen a lemon-faced white girl dressed in a trim frock, a cocked feather-

cap, and in high heels. She was sitting there absorbed in herself, apparently in a happy reverie. The Clicky-Clicky who was rather ahead of the two went near the girl and looked up for something to be given to him. The girl gave him a boiled potato which it carried joyfully into the forest.

"Now, my good old man, who is this witch?" said the black man.

"Sh! she is my goddess who will be very angry indeed if I do not smile and make a bow to her, and request her to accompany me to a cafe-de-luxe or a picture to-night. She is my first goddess . . . first in everything! For me she is the centre of Eternity around whom I spin and spin, and still there seems to be no end to it."

The grey old man called aloud, "A penny for your thoughts!" She was startled. He beckoned her and in response to which when she approached nearer, he made a bow, and slantingly glanced at his companion to follow suit, who lost no time in whispering in his ear, "No, no, certainly I cannot do that. She is your goddess, and not mine. Besides, she is a false goddess . . . . . ."

"Hullo, you nearly took the life out of me," she said to the Irishman playfully, and then cast a glance at the black man. It so chanced that the goddess had just overheard the last words of the black man, and smiling a bewitching smile she said, "Look here you tawpie!" and as she said so, she placed her hands on both sides of her slim waist and

turned round to show her form to him; and as soon as she had done this she gave a slight slap on the black man's rough cheek and remarked, "Have you ever seen a more perfect 'God', so beautiful, so enchanting, so lovely, so symmetrical in body and form, and so completely 'natural'? This worshipper of mine is not living in a fool's paradise. He knows well what he does, and says what he means. I am his goddess, and the goddess of those of his way of thinking. Why is the New World mad after me? Why is the whole white race raving about me? Why does this Irishman love me and adore me? There must be something characteristic about me which attracts their fancy, and they simply pine for a stealing glimpse of me; and who

would fain be my very shadows. Hear me, you Oriental idiot!"

The black man, being a black man of course . . . . a simpleton and an honest fellow, who had learnt to walk straight and talk straight, had never known what was meant by Modern Gallantry, and when he found himself thus insulted by this white 'goddess', he burst out in a flare-up: "Go! take this unfettered slave of yours away with you. To me you are nothing more than a chained bitch who falls with equal fury on every one whom she does not know, often bites the best friend of the house in her calves, and barks incessantly. I do not think it necessary to throw the growling 'goddess' a bone to stop her watering mouth. Don't be furiously savage, and

do not show me all your hungry teeth. I have no love for thee. You may be the 'goddess' of those who love a white face, blue eyes, golden hair, and all the other contents of a twentieth century toilet-box. This man . . . . . . ah! what shadow he is and what shadow he pursues! To me you are what you are . . . . a false vision, a false hope, and the evil spirit of your race."

By the time he had finished, the white girl or 'goddess' call by what name you choose, had moved away, and soon enough was lost to sight. This skirmish of the black man and the white 'goddess' had pained the grey old man beyond measure; and who had all along been boiling within himself now exclaimed, "How dare you! how dare you!" and

rubbed his eyes to ascertain whether what had happened was actually so, or that he had been dreaming only a dreadful dream. But it was too real to be called unreal. The black man with his roguish smile and a triumphant face concealed the ideas that were uppermost in his mind, and tried to reconcile with his guide to whom he had so solemnly promised not to be inquisitive: "I am awfully sorry. I never meant to say all that I did. The words came to me of their own accord. I shall make a recompense in future."

"Don't repeat such a thing and everything will be all right."

And so they proceeded further in their search for God in the white man's 'Rickety-land'.

IV

"Now, where shall we go?" said the black man.

"In search of God, to be sure, wherever He pleases to meet us," quoth his guide.

"Look! who goes there on the chariot? . . . . Aye!"

The man who was riding in the chariot driven by two leopards, seemed to hear the call of the black man. They ran up to meet him, and the black man said, "Excuse me baas, you have knowing eyes. I am in search of God. Can you direct me to where He is? But pray, tell me, who are you?"

"I am Bachhus, the God of Wine. I have left Olympus and now have my celestial abode in Paris, the City of Champagne. I reign there. Besides, the whole of the West has accepted me as their God of Gaiety. My rule is supreme."

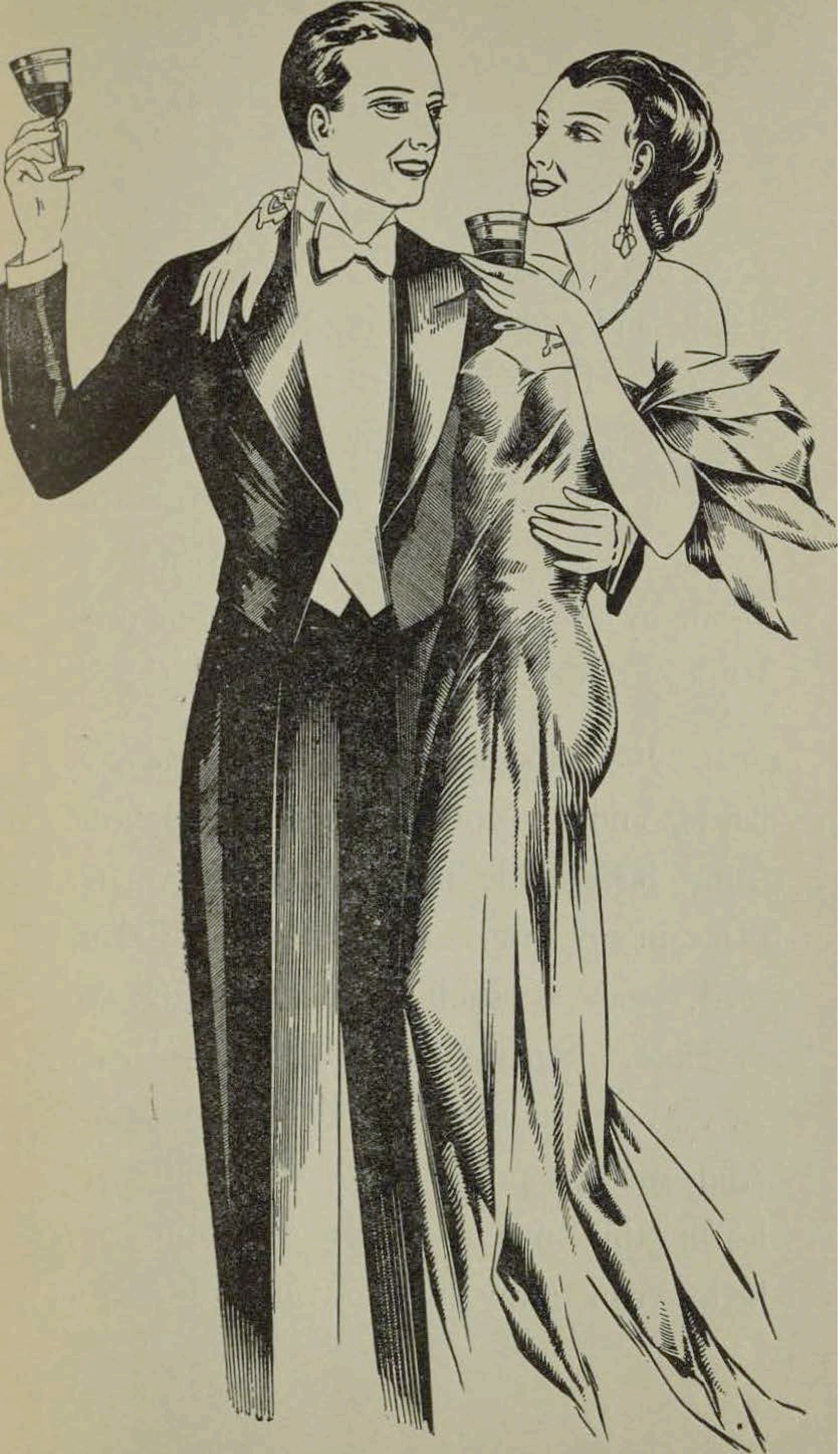
"But where can I find God?" asked the black man.

"Oh! do not trouble about that," he said, "take life easy. Just have a corking time. Eat, drink and be merry. Take the world as it comes; for beyond it there is nothing. All roads end at the grave, which is the gate of nothingness; and in the shadow of nothingness everything is vanity. Take my advice and seek no further than the end of your

nose. You will always know that there is something beyond that, and in that knowledge you will be hopeful and happy."

"But I desire a knowledge of God more than happiness or hope. God is my happiness and hope."

"You are a fool to think that. Believe in what the whites believe. Drink and get lost in its intoxication. We are always 'wet', and never dry. Fly then to an ethereal world of your own. There it is all pleasure and no sorrow. O, for a draught of vintage! O, for a beakerful of the warm South! . . . . anything in the world! Believe in wine, woman and war.



"Make the best of your time; let care be the devil's share. Drink and drink, and make all your glasses go clink. Dance a Fox-trot or a Waltz and sing, 'There is somebody waiting for me', or 'Just a little closer'. Let your passions loose, 'cause you know, ev'rything is spoilt by use. So get the best out of it while you can."

"That's nonsense! Here go your pards, and if you want to save your skin, better ride home. You have no place in my heart. You are the God of Evil, and as such you are black to the core. So, we are both 'blacks' . . . . your interior and mine exterior. And similar poles repel each other (I learnt this much at my school). So, better run away with your life, else

you shall be paid in your own coin . . . .
. . . . farewell."

Having said this, he caught his companion by the arm and moved away. Discretion is the better part of valour, and so the black man refrained from despatching the God of Wine safe to hell; who on his part, thanked his stars for a lucky escape and went away from whither he had come.

And so they proceeded further in their search of God in the white man's Pixieland.

V

The pair went on warily, until they saw a naked old man with a number six nose holding a sun-bath parade of lovely girls and handsome young men, all in the same Nature's dress that he himself 'wore'. The weather was mild and pleasant. A river was flowing by their side and the company seemed to enjoy the parade pretty well. On the sight of these two men, the old 'commander' dismissed the company; and forming themselves in couples, the batch of young nudists left the place to enjoy themselves. The black man was rather stunned to see all of these young people

stark naked. For the simple fellow it was nothing short of Pixieland. On enquiry, however, it transpired that the old man was the Nudist God. Approaching near him, the black man said, " Say, baas, are you the prophet that goes stripped and naked wailing like the dragons and mourning like the owls ? I am seeking God. Can you show me where he is ? "

" I am God. When I made Adam and Eve, I made them after my features, because they were to be my deputies on Earth. As such I ordered them to remain in the natural state in which they were created by me. In the primitive ages, till long after their creation, they hardly covered themselves. But as soon as they began to call themselves

civilized people, they were impertinent enough to care but little for my commandment. So I was really very angry with them ! I had contemplated to pronounce a curse on them and to perish their race altogether ! But upon later advice I thought it expedient to come down myself and give them a wee bit of sound advice to do away with these clothes and coverings. Why should a human being cover itself when every other creation of mine can do without it ? Moreover, these are days of economic depression. It is an unnecessary expenditure. Isn't it ? The Lancashire mills cannot possibly provide clothing to the whole of humanity. And then it is a waste of human energy, labour and money. People can do as well without it as in days of yore.

" I, therefore, made a general proclamation that no men or women of my creation shall cover themselves. The black race proved to be a bit 'too' obstinate, so I have left them Godless. I am now the white Nudist God."

" But it is beyond all laws of decency and morality to remain nude. You are certainly off your head. You had better remain for some time in a lunatic asylum or in the Black Hole of Calcutta ; and take my tip, you will be all right."

" What's this decency and morality that you talk about ? It is all bosh ! Turn to the Bible and you will find : " But for Adam there was not found a helpmeet, and the Lord (I) caused a deep

sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He (I) took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh thereof; and the rib, which the Lord (I) had taken from man, made He (I) a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, 'This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called a woman, because she was taken out of a man'." I made woman for the use of man, and when one was made out of the other, why should flesh be concealed from flesh? Let flesh take care of flesh and men and women will take care of themselves."

The 'uncivilized' black man caught the Nudist God by his beard and threw him with such a forceful swing that the fellow fell right in the mid-stream and

began to cry for his life. On hearing the sound of the splash, the young couples, who had gone away for their lonely, likely, lively and lovely talks, came running to the place where stood the black man in awful rage. On their approach he gave such a fearful roar that the young Nudists ran a two-mile-race without a stoppage or a fall. And the Nudist God made desperate efforts to cross the river, but the fates being odd he was drowned and got lost.

The grey old man could not bear this sight and was standing with his head cast down in apparent grief, when the black man turned his attention to his aged companion: "What has upset you, old boy."

"You are an uncivilized brute, that's what you are! I now lament on my folly. I should never have brought you with me to this Pixieland."

"Now, that's not like an honest fellow; I have done you no harm."

"But you have exposed my goddesses and gods for nothing, and handled them rather too roughly," said the grey old man, rather angrily.

"Look here, old fellow, if I wish to accept what is really good in them, I must weigh them in the balance, crude and rude as you say, I am; and bad luck that I always found them wanting. So, what I can say about them is: 'Weighed and found wanting'. I don't mean all this, but something unpleasant always

happens and here we are. Let's make up, good chap."

"All right, but nothing like this in future; and take care to be civil and polite."

"So so."

And so they proceeded in their search for God in the white man's Blunderland.

VI

They had not gone very far off when they beheld a fellow snapping a tune 'ra . . . . ra . . . . la . . . . la . . . . la . . . .' to himself. The old man called him aloud, to which the 'Singing God' waved his hand.

The black man and his companion met him with a smile and the former said, "Say, baas, who are you?"

"Why, I am the God of Matrimony. Do you want to marry some white girl?"

"I do not seek marriage. I seek God."

"You can see God only if you are 'married'."

"So the whites get their God upon this previous condition; and by the way, what is your system of matrimony, and the marriageable age among you?"

"In the first instance, we marry without marrying at all, and the initial marriage may be 'solemnized' as soon as the young people learn to wink at each other, but in case you want to 'really' marry, then, have a courtship with a lass, impress a passionate kiss on her lips, propose it, and there you have it. Come to me then; I shall play the high-priest and pronounce you man and wife with the final 'Whom God hath joined together, let not man put asunder',



The tiniest girl in the West knows how to wink, and dance to any tune.

though experience has shown that it somehow or other always goes wrong. But then we always seek variety, and variety is the spice of life."

"It's no good. I hate such a thing."

"But no effort is required on your part. You need not worry much about it if you happen to be black in complexion. Girls are in abundance here. Their population is approximately two-thirds of the whole. So it comes to two women to a man. Jolly good luck! Isn't it? And beautiful faces, they."

"That's more than I can tolerate. We do not indulge in such an immoral kidding. Keep your beautiful faces with

you. They are as black inside as they are white without . . . ."

He had not finished the sentence when an unhappy-looking boy came running to the black man; but no sooner he came very near than his face indicated an apparent look of disappointment, yet the lad expressed himself, "Hullo, are you my new father?"

"Why do you ask that, my boy? Is your father dead?"

"Oh no," he answered, "well, I can't say. As far as I can make out, he has gone away, and my mummy told me that my new father will be coming to-day; and she said he would be 'dressed' in black."

"But I am not your father, good boy."

"Oh, mummy has so many of them friends, that I can't find out anybody for my father," he said, beginning to cry. "You see they have been changing about so often since I can remember that I don't know who's my father, or whether I have a father at all."

"You will notice," said the God of Marriage, standing beside the black man, "that in the New Morality (which pervades the entire West) we have a new freedom. The old ideas of the family, with its restrictions and restraints, were relics of a slave morality which we have now outgrown. It was unworthy of the whites who are so 'advanced' people. It is not fair to either the husband or the wife that they should be expected to 'keep only unto him (or her) so long as

they both shall live'. We have altered that."

"And why do these changing fathers of this unlucky child play hide and seek, may I ask?" said the black man. "This is nothing but sheer immorality. Why do the girls change their husbands as they change their skirts? They should have partners to unions that never need dissolving. Why should it be at all necessary for either the husband or the wife to say: 'You made a mistake my man or vice versa?' And then they are very bold in husband hunting! That's why I tell you, you are standing on a shaky rock, whose bed has been cut short by immorality, and it shall not be long when you will fall headlong in and get crushed to pieces. Not a bone of

your white figure shall be traceable. That's my say ! Don't forget it, and you shall be the richer for it."

He seemed to be too much indignant on this ' Immoral God '. With these words he straightened his bow and arrow and shot the deity through his ankles.

" Now take it, that's my souvenir to you, you vile follow ! "

And taking the child in his arms, and asking his companion to accompany him, he moved off. The deity had fallen on the ground due to severe pain. They left him there to play the ' high-priest '.

The little boy guided them to the place he had come from. The old man seemed familiar with the route.

And so they proceeded further in their search for God in the white man's Beautyland.

VII

When they had reached the place to which the little boy had directed them, they saw a white chit of a girl sitting at a distance, under the cool shade of a tree, and looking at her lineaments in a small mirror. She seemed apparently very much pleased with herself. She was smiling and making strange faces to her image in the mirror.

The little boy could not help saying to his black companion and benefactor, "My mummy is just like this, but she is not my mummy." The black man gave no answer to the boy, but instead cast a quick look at his elder guide, who

seemed to understand what the black fellow meant by this inquisitive glance. The white girl had, by this time, seen these adventurers coming towards her; and placing the small mirror in her vanity case, she stood up to greet them.

"Hullo, gentlemen, whither are you bound?"

The black man was prompt enough to reply, "Young lady, I am in search of God. Can you direct me to where He is?"

"Pooh! God resides within me. I am Venus, the Goddess of Beauty. God is within me as I am His perfect home. And as such, having met me you have found your God. Ask this old man to vouch for the truth of my statement."



"What do you mean by beauty?" asked the black man.

"Look at my face and find it out for yourself," she replied.

The old man nodded his head in assent.

"What do you mean by beauty?" asked the black man.

"Look at my face and find it out for yourself," she replied.

"What's that red thing on your lips?"

"It's the kiss-proof lip-stick which I have applied to my lips. It makes them look like a pomegranate in colour, and yet a kiss impressed on them does not mar the make-up. How do you like that?"

"It is a dirty mask that you wear. Your face is so unnatural. Is a white face indicative of beauty? No, no, you

cannot deceive me, 'uncivilized' though I am. The human form, when it comes from the Creator's hands is perfect in loveliness. It is the embodiment of all that is noble, graceful, winning, impressive and charming. I cannot doubt that God made a perfect body as the temple and home of a perfect soul that bore His own image. He who made all things beautiful certainly gave the highest loveliness to His masterpiece . . . . . woman. 'Desperately white women remake the faces that God gave them and when they find that beauty has eluded them, leaving in its place a death-mask in a mocking grimace, they weep. It is not beauty they seek but its counterfeit, which is always ugly'. What do I find on your dirty face: something white here and

something artificially rosy there? Even from a Christian point of view, does beauty consist in mere physical charms, in proportion, grace, figure or a 'white complexion'? No! It is in the life, the soul that looks out through these windows. You must have a 'stainless soul within, which may outshine the fairest skin'. You hear me, you Painted Devil?"

"Do you think," he continued, "you achieve beauty by painting your cheeks and lips, by a little powder to take the shine off your noses, and a make-up of the eyebrows? Alas! only if womanhood in the West gave as much thought and pains to keep the bloom of their heart's purity untarnished and sweet-

ness of their heart's life unwasted, their faces would shine with the lustre of angelic beauty. 'To make a God of artificial face beauty is as thoroughly immoral as any vice I can think of'."

He looked straight into her eyes. His look had a sharpness about it. The 'goddess' could not stand it. She began to foam and change her colours like the serpent in 'Lamia'.

"Go away! I cannot find my God through you. Make haste, else I may reduce you to cinder, dust and ashes."

The 'goddess' covered her face in shame and ran away. She was soon lost to sight. The black man's anger too had now subsided.

He placed the little boy on the ground who ran away to his house yonder. As soon as he reached the gate, he smiled, and placing his forefingers to his lips, he called out loudly, "So long!"

In reply, the black man waved his hand merrily, and turning to his companion said, "So you have seen your white girls who are nothing but gold-diggers or empty-headed chocolate-box beauties. What was your Goddess of Beauty, old man . . . . just a painted piece of statuary!"

The grey old Irishman, poor fellow, could not make an answer. He had begun to think over the Western ideas and ideals, and was beginning to find some grains of truth in what the black

man had set forth. He had come to realise the shallowness and hollowness of the West, and Western 'gods'. But still he would not frankly admit all this, and tried to walk erect as if he was hoping against hope to win ultimately, maybe by a freak of chance, the case for the whites who filled his belly.

So he remarked, "Let's go further and see what happens. We have still a greater God to find."

And so they went on in their search for God in the white man's Christland.

VIII

After this adventure the black man felt distinctly sulky. He had not found God, and had lost his temper so many times without any satisfaction in return, whatever. The grey old man took him to the hill-side, and they had not gone very far when they saw in the distance something like a vision.

Yes, now everything was clearer. There could be seen a middle-aged man clothed in purple, and platted with a crown of thorns about his head. Soon enough he vanished, and they saw in his stead, perhaps, the same man with soft black hair and wearing only a loin-cloth.

He was, apparently, nailed to a cross of the size of his figure. His hands, which were also nailed, were extended in their natural directions, and his feet crossed. There was evidently a godly lustre on his face, a beam of pure and holy love in his sparkling eyes, and a halo around his head.

The black man was rather overawed by this divine figure, more so because he thought he might be a prophet.

By this time, the adventurer and his old companion had reached quite near this nailed figure.

"Is he your God?" the black man whispered to his guide.

"He is the Son of God, Jesus Christ, and the light of the world," replied the

grey old man, and saying so, he took out the Bible from his pocket and read these words, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (John, XIV, 9.)

"Come, my children, peace be unto you!"

The grey old man and the black man made a bow. But the latter's eyes still bore a suspicious look. The 'Son of God' seemed to understand the apparent fears of the black fellow. "Do not be suspicious about me, my child. It is but natural for you after having witnessed the false gods and goddesses of my followers. They have brought infamy and calumny to my name.

"Believe me, for I recognize your sincerity, I am not a cunning man. I

am all-Truth. Since you have travelled so far to seek a true God for the misled West, ye shall have Him."

"Who made this world?" asked the black man.

"God, besides whom there is no god, the Knower of the Unseen and the Seen; He is the Beneficent, the Merciful. He is God besides whom there is no god, the King, the Holy, the Author of Peace, the Granter of Security, Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Restorer of every loss, the Possessor of every greatness. Glory be to God from whom they put with Him.

"He is God the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner; His are the most excellent names, whatever is in the heavens and

the earth declares His glory, and He is the Mighty, the Wise."

(The Quran, LIX, 22, 23, 24.)

"And He is God, our Heavenly Father, as we would have it. But in all these, by whatever name you call Him, there is not a wee bit of difference."

"And God is our Father, is He?"

"Most certainly."

"And we are all His sons?"

"Of course."

"This means we are all brethren on this earth. But why, I see there is a distinction of colours and creeds. Why does the white think himself infinitely superior to the black man? Has the black no brains, and worth? Has he no

abilities? Is he not a human being worth the name? And if he is, then why, oh why, for heaven's sake tell me, the whites do not practise it?" And he continued, "Are we bastards? Out with what you have got to say, you reasonable God!"

"Splendid!" said the 'Son of God', "that's just what I wanted you to ask me. You are a clever and an intelligent man, I see.

"The whites, to whom you refer, have all gone hypocrites. They are hypocrites. I told you I shall be reasonable. They are also the descendants of the same ancestors . . . . the Aryans. It does not behove them to look down upon you. They are grossly mistaken, and they shall pay for it some day.

Their life as it is now constituted, is a mere sham . . . . . . a mockery !

"You know I am Jesus Christ, whom they believe in. And sometimes when I see what they are doing, it again escapes my lips: 'O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you'?

(St. Mark, IX, 19.)

"Take my message unto them . . . . . the message of true Christian life, for you deserve it on account of the pains you have taken to set them to rights: the very life they have brought to a disrepute. It is a life, as the East now leads: of truth, humility, service, brotherhood of man and sisterhood of woman; a life of honour, love and liberty.

"Tell them that theirs is a life which is taken up out of the ruin of sin and attached to the life of Christ, myself. Apart from God, men are but dead and withering branches, having no life; but attached to Him they become living branches covered with leaves and fruit. They live only in Him, and, therefore, let them be righteous.

"They have gone too materialistic, too proud, too conceited. Let them offer what they have to offer to their Oriental brethren, with a feeling of love and brotherhood. And they must shun the shallow life they are now leading.

"Let them remember that every one of them has a network of attachments binding his or her little fragments of being to the great web of life around

us. There are a thousand relationships which link them to their fellow-men, to home, to church, to the world, to society, to truth, to humanity, to duty; and every one of these connections implies responsibility. They must do their duty.

"But it pains me beyond measure to find that all are running a godless race knowing neither the start nor the finish, breaking each other's head, living a life of lust, and indulging in all sorts of immoral foolings.

"Tell them, pray tell them, that a white face shall no longer continue to be the stamp of 'self-imposed' superiority, and let them make amends for the past, and correct themselves for the future. They owe their origin to the Orient, and

the Orient is still the Mighty Mother from whose holy breasts they have sucked the milk of Paradise.

"And one thing more: the devil is in their hands and in their eyes, who seldom creates mild earthquakes, and mischief too often, and turning to the Irishman, he said:

"'And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

'Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

'And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into

the Kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire :

'Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.'

(St. Mark, IX, 43, 44, 47, 48.)

"Young man! blessed art thou, that thou hast taken upon thyself to expose them in their entire nudity, in order, that they may yet listen and become men, true men, for all the name is well worth, and be thus fit to be called the deputies of God on earth.

"Tell them also, that Truth is God and God is Truth."

"And that East shall be the liberator of the West. Peace be unto you!"

And after so saying, he vanished, the Irishman being the wiser for the

message that Christ had given for the white race.

And as soon as they lifted their heads, lo! they saw on the hill-top the same saintly figure blessing them, and smiling a loving smile. When suddenly, lifting his eyes to heaven, the figure seemed to cry and utter something at the top of his voice, the meaning of which the Irishman apparently understood. He acquainted the black man with it, and shrugging his airplane shoulders, said: "We have been living in a fool's paradise, my young man. You are our liberator. Command me, I am your slave.

"Your God is our God. We were all going astray. God is Universal. God is One, ours or yours, it makes no

difference. We have really ceased to believe in the Heavenly Father. Our 'goddesses' and 'gods' were all false and earthly. We have simply been having a corking time . . . . simply clinking our cannikins and throwing our religion to the dogs! East is the home of religions where religions have been nurtured, and constantly and truly followed. We have yet to take a lesson from them.

"We have also never acted on 'Peace on earth and goodwill towards all men!'"

The black man consoled him and said, "There! there! that's like a good fellow. Be of good cheer, man! Your religion is as good and as true as ours or

anybody else's. It is only in its living that the vast difference exists.

"Let us go to the West and find out what the children of Christ are engaged in. The East is safe. So there is no worry about her."

"Yes, a good idea! Let us see whether they are busy in counting the latest cricket score or the tints of the rainbow, or something of the sort."

And so they went to the Western world to deliver the message of TRUTH to the white race, and also their 'living for the Kingdom of God'.

IX

After several days of sea journey they arrived on the continent of Europe, and found to their utter astonishment and dismay that the continent was full to overflowing with the entire white race. This assemblage, as it transpired shortly after, had in view the immediate object to decide, in a conference, about the existence of God. People were agog with enthusiasm and were soon to be seen carrying their own cathedrals and churches on their shoulders.

The black man, as he landed on seashore, sounded his trumpet.

There was all silence.

"What's the matter with the white race?" he asked.

There was again a confusion and a babel of noises, when he sounded his trumpet a second time. The grey old man who had gone for a tete-a-tete with the leader announced that these people had come to drown their gods, goddesses and godlets into the Mediterranean Sea, and were bent upon creating a Brave New World with new ideas and ideals. It would not even be Sir Thomas More's Utopia, but something very strange and very new, and absolutely unthought of before. It would even surpass Gulliver's Lilliput or Brobdingnag. "Nudism, of course, would be the first principle, and the rest you can imagine," he concluded.

"But why, may I ask?" exclaimed the black man, "have you found no God? Your God is as good as anybody else's, provided you know Him and understand Him."

On hearing this, there rushed thousands of people with Eiffel towers on their heads, bearing different signposts, 'Love', 'Service', 'Humility', 'Morality', 'Immorality', 'Duty', 'Truth', 'Church' and others. There was again a confusion of voices.

The black man saw the necessity of sounding his trumpet a third time, and addressed the white race thus: "You of the West, shall I call, you of the white race? I was in search of God. God is Truth and as such I was a seeker

after Truth. And I have found the same what was taught me in my teens.

"Either the Irishman was led astray by you, or he has led you astray. You have, of late, worshipped, exalted and adored false gods and goddesses. You were all blinded by false conceptions. You had forgotten Christ and had come to believe in earthly deities. That's exactly why you have come to drown your gods into the Mediterranean Sea. Surely they have led you nowhere. And you are decidedly the poorer for it! You have hated the East. But let the East be your liberator. I bring to you the message of Christ to lead a true and honest life, devoid of all earthly shams. And your own representative is the only other mortal witness of the Prophet

whom you call the 'Son of God'. He charged me with this commandment:

'Tell them: Truth is Universal. God is Universal . . . . . . ONE. Verily, therefore, let Truth guide you in all your worldly actions.'

"And when he vanished, he was seen on the hill-top, while still nailed to the cross and cried aloud, 'Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani?' (St. Mark, XV, 34), which means, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' His God had forsaken him, because, if this had not been the case, his followers could never have ventured to do the same.

"And in so doing he lifted his eyes to heaven.

"You are all shameless people. I do not reproach you unreservedly. He

suffered for you, but you have all turned godless . . . . Now throw your Eiffel towers into the sea, and just behold which sinks the last."

There was a thunderous sound with which all towers went into the sea, and every tower sank, sooner or later, except the one which bore the signpost, 'TRUTH'.

"There you have it!" ejaculated the black man, "Truth is imperishable. It outlasts everything else in this world. So the victory is ours. But the black race shall not treat you as the vanquished. You are still our brethren. We are all the sons of God. Let us in perfect amity determine to live the life of God amongst ourselves, to live the life of

those who serve others because they love humanity, and love it because they love God."

The white race was apparently appreciative of what the black man had set forth. They also seemed to value the message he had brought them.

There was a thunderous applause and the black man continued, "One word more: The East is still waiting for you with open and extended arms to take you all of the West in her loving and warm embrace."

"So, so," cried the sea of humanity, "we will make a fresh start. But let bygones be bygones."

They seemed to be convinced of the black man's sincerity of purpose, and

began to move off while extolling him to great heights for all that he had done for the white race.

The black man and the Irishman looked towards each other. The latter could not face him eye to eye, and dropped down his head in veneration.

The black fellow boarded the ship to return to the Orient whose honour he had vindicated, and had also done a good turn to the misled West by setting them to rights. As the liner whistled, the old man heartily shook hands with his younger friend, and wished him 'god-speed'. He also thanked him for teaching them a true lesson. He confessed that he had been a godsend to them, and had aroused them of their lethargy.

"I shall now stop writing plays, and also stories, and will no longer stand on my head, but as an alternative I have made up my mind to become an insurance agent. That will give me money enough, and fun galore. How do you like that?"

"Good-bye!" said the black man, waving his hand merrily, as the ship glided upon the waters, "that's a good job, insuring people. But pray assure yourself in what you do. Be always true to yourself and to others around you. Never deceive yourself, and remember! always 'keep your sunny side up, and hide the side that gets blue!'"

And thus ended the adventures of the black man in his search for

God in the white man's no man's land.

POSTSCRIPTUM

The book had originally finished with the last chapter but here is a proof, if proof is needed at all, as regards the prospect of the West, if it chooses to follow its own way. Whenever and wherever religion is concerned, the Mighty Orient must find a conspicuous place for itself. The Irishman of the preceding 'Adventures' would do well to assume his upright position and learn something more from the following lines. They shall leave him none the poorer :

"To the Young Men and Women of India :—

Dear Friends :

You of the East can help us of the West more, perhaps, than you imagine, because it is from the genius of the East that all the religious idealism of man has sprung. You seem to have the secret of the spirit, as you have imparted it to humanity through the centuries gone by. In ancient times you had the immortal Budha. To-day you have the equally immortal Mahatma Gandhi. In these we see your supreme gifts to mankind, and with them, as with Jesus and Zoroaster and the Hebrew prophets, we must march to the great goal of brotherhood.

You young people of the East can also help us just because you are young, and thus hold in your hands the promise of the future. That future will be dark or bright, a thing of death or life, according as you, the youth of the world, are faithful to God's will and seek in His immortal name the building of His Kingdom among men. Do not fail us, for we look to you to save the world which the present generation (in the West) has all but lost.

Together we must clap hands and touch hearts across the stretch of continents and over the vast gulf of encompassing seas. We must recognize and acclaim our essential kinship and achieve the promises of our common life. As we are all children of God, so we are

members of the great family of God and thus brothers together. Frontiers must not divide us, nor creeds separate us. We must yield to no superstition of nationalism and fall victims to no prejudices of race. For as one of our great prophets has said, 'God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell together on the face of the earth!'"

—John Hayes Holmes.

There you have the recipe, the open sesame; have you or haven't you?

GOD IS TRUTH

A

[The book finishes with the postscriptum, but since Mr. John Hayes Holmes has made mention of the 'immortal Mahatma Gandhi', it is considered most appropriate in connection with this work that the views of that famous Saint of Sabarmati should be quoted below for the guidance of the white race who have, through prolonged experience, found in him a second 'Christ', even though they may not think it judicious to declare so in open words. But the fact remains that, both by his promise and performance, this great soul of the East has discovered the real secret of the existence of God, and which he has proclaimed times without number as the 'search after truth'. THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH IS TO HIM THE SEARCH FOR GOD.

Arguments and reason, as he says, are lacking to convince this great experiment which

itself transcends reason. Equally, therefore, the Irishman of the preceding 'Adventures' is advised not to attempt 'the impossible' :—]

"There is an indefinable mysterious power that pervades everything. I feel it though I do not see it. It is this unseen power which makes itself felt and yet defies all proof, because it is so unlike all that I perceive through my senses. It transcends the senses, but it is possible to reason out the existence of God to a limited extent. Even in ordinary affairs, we know that people do not know who rules or why, and how he rules, and yet they know that there is a power that certainly rules. In my tour last year in Mysore I met many poor villagers and I found upon enquiry that they did not know who ruled Mysore. They simply said some god ruled it. If

the knowledge of these poor people was so limited about their ruler, I, who am infinitely lesser in respect to God than they to their ruler need not be surprised if I do not realise the presence of God, the King of Kings.

Nevertheless, I do feel as the poor villagers felt about Mysore that there is orderliness in the universe. There is an unalterable law governing everything and every being that exists or lives. It is not a blind law, for no blind law can govern the conduct of living beings, and thanks to the marvellous researches of Sir J. C. Bose, it can now be proved that even matter is life. That law, then, which governs all life is God. Law and the Law-Giver are one. I may not deny the Law or the Law-Giver because I

know so little about it or Him. Just as my denial or ignorance of the existence of an earthly power will avail me nothing, even so, my denial of God and His law will not liberate me from its operation. Whereas, humble and mute acceptance of divine authority makes life's journey easier even as the acceptance of earthly rule makes life under it easier. I do dimly perceive that whilst everything around me is ever-changing, ever-dying, there is underlying all that change a living power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves, and recreates.

B

"That informing power or spirit is God. And since nothing ills that I see, merely through the senses can or will persist, He alone is. And is this power benevolent or malevolent? I see it as purely benevolent. For I can see that in the midst of death, life persists; in the midst of untruth, truth persists; in the midst of darkness, light persists. Hence I gather that God is Life, Truth, Light. He is Love. He is the Supreme Good. But He is no God who merely satisfies the intellect, if He ever does. God to be God must rule the heart and transform it. He must express Himself in every smallest act of His

votary. This can only be done through a definite realisation more real than the five senses can ever produce. Sense perceptions can be and often are false and deceptive, however real they may appear to us. Where there is realisation outside the senses, it is infallible. It is proved not by extreme extraneous evidence but in the transformed conduct and character of those who have felt the real presence of God within. Such testimony is to be found in the experiences of an unbroken line of prophets and sages in all countries and climes.

To reject this evidence is to deny oneself. This realisation is preceded by an immovable phase. He, who would, in his own person, test the fact of God's

presence, can do so by a living phase and since phase itself cannot be proved by extraneous evidence, the safest course is to believe in the moral government of the world. And, therefore, in the supremacy of the moral law . . . . the law of Truth and Love. Exercise of this will be the safest where there is a clear determination summarily to reject all that is contrary to Truth and Law.

I confess that I have no argument to convince through reason which transcends reason. All that I can advise is not to attempt the impossible ! ! ! "

—Mahatma Gandhi.